



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
HEADQUARTERS, 24th INFANTRY DIVISION (MECH) and FORT RILEY
FORT RILEY, KANSAS 66442-5000

REPLY TO
ATTENTION OF

AFZN-GA-AS

10 July 2004

SUBJECT: Minutes of the Fort Riley Retiree Council

Call to Order: A meeting of the Fort Riley Retiree Council was called to order by the chairperson, MSG (Ret) Michael L. Heronemus, USA, at 1015 hours on 10 July 2004.

Invocation: SGM (Ret) Joseph A. Gilmore, USA, gave the invocation.

Pledge of Allegiance: MSG Heronemus led council members in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

Minutes: The minutes of the council's meeting on 17 April 2004 were approved.

Committee Reports:

Liaison with Post Exchange and Commissary - SFC (Ret) Robert Peterson, USA, reported that both the Post Exchange and Commissary councils were discontinued. Apparently there was a lack of interest and support by senior council members.

Membership on Retiree Council – BG (Ret) Thomas J. Kennedy introduced COL (Ret) Verlyn Steinkruger, USA, to council members and nominated him for membership. COL Steinkruger's membership was approved by acclamation.

Discussion:

a. CSM (Ret) Juventino Rodriguez, USA, commented that veterans were being turned away for care by Veterans Administration (VA) hospitals. Apparently so many veterans have sought care for problems unrelated to service-connected disabilities that the waiting time for appointments grew to between three and four months. The VA's more restrictive policy is aimed at speeding up appointments for veterans truly in need of care. LTC (Ret) Stanley Sutton, USA, interjected that a veteran with a service-connected problem could not be turned away by the VA without at least being evaluated. He said it took the VA 13 months to review his situation and make a determination.

b. There remains one vacancy on the council-that of a widow or widower. SGM Gilmore will make inquiries.

c. Ms. Kathy Cunningham-Tucker, RSO, discussed a MILPERCEN message that withdrew enlisted retirement approval authority from special court martial convening authorities and placed it with the Human Resources Command in Alexandria, VA. This measure increased the RSO workload. She added that her office processed retirement papers for 54

noncommissioned officers assigned to 3rd Brigade, 1st Armored Division that recently redeployed from Iraq.

d. Ms. Cunningham-Tucker mentioned two other personnel retention measures that have taken effect: First, E6's now will be allowed to remain on active duty until 22 instead of 20 years. Second, the stop-loss messages received at Fort Riley retain service personnel on active duty from 90 days prior to a unit's deployment until 90 days after redeployment. The result is a shorter period of time between deployments during which personnel separation actions can be processed.

e. Ms. Cunningham-Tucker said the Retirement Services Newsletter would be put in the mail to retirees in Fort Riley's area of responsibility on 12 July 2004. Regarding Retiree Appreciation Day 2004 (RAD '04), to be held on 10 September 2004, she said that there existed a possibility that Senator Sam Brownback may be available to speak at it.

f. Irwin Army Community Hospital (IACH) will offer a hospital tour during RAD '04 in addition to an address by the hospital commander and a health fair. It is anticipated that flu vaccine will be unavailable that early this Fall.

g. Council members were requested to solicit door prizes for RAD '04. Checks for monetary donations should be made payable to the "Retirement Services Office."

h. Ms. Cunningham-Tucker announced that LTC Matthew A. Richards is the new G1 at Fort Riley.

Adjournment: There being no further old or new business to conduct, the meeting adjourned at 1115 hours. The next meeting will be on 28 August 2004.



JACKSON HOAGLAND, JR.
LTC (Ret), USA, Recorder



MICHAEL L. HERONEMUS
MSG (Ret), USA, Chairperson



KATHY CUNNINGHAM-TUCKER
DAC, Retirement Services Officer